

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD

March 15, 2018

The Economic Development Advisory Board of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, Oklahoma, met in the Municipal Building Conference Room at 201 West Gray on the 15th day of March, 2018, at 8:09 a.m. Notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Municipal Building 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Hossein Farzaneh  
Ben Graves  
Alexander Holmes  
Chris Purcell  
Sue Ringus  
Chuck Thompson, Chairman

### MEMBERS ABSENT:

Edd Painter

### OTHERS PRESENT:

Mr. Jeff Bryant, City Attorney  
Ms. Brenda Hall, City Clerk  
Ms. Sara Kaplan, Retail Marketing Coordinator  
Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works  
Mr. Jason Smith, Director of Norman Economic Development Coalition  
Ms. Kathryn Walker, Assistant City Attorney II  
Mr. Darry Stacy, Cleveland County Commissioner  
Ms. Leslie Tabor, ADG, Inc. (NORMAN FORWARD)

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### Item 1. Welcome and introductions.

Chairman Thompson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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### Item 2. Approval of the September 7, 2017, meeting minutes.

Member Purcell moved that the minutes be approved and the filing thereof be directed, which motion was duly seconded by Member Holmes;

Items submitted for the record

1. Norman Economic Development Board minutes of September 7, 2017

and the question being upon approval of the minutes and upon the subsequent directive, a vote was taken with the following result:

### YEAS:

Members Farzaneh, Graves, Holmes, Purcell, Ringus,  
and Chairman Thompson

### NAYES:

None

Chairman Thompson declared the motion carried and the minutes approved and the filing thereof was directed.

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**Item 3. Presentation and discussion regarding the Norman Economic Development Coalitions' Strategic Plan for Economic Development. (Matt Tarleton, Market Street Solutions)**

Chairman Thompson said in 1995, the City of Norman, University of Oklahoma (OU), and Norman Chamber of Commerce collaboratively created the Norman Economic Development Coalition (NEDC) who conducted an Economic Development Study that became the cornerstone for economic development in Norman. He said when Mr. Jason Smith was hired as Director of NEDC, he recommended the study be updated and a Steering Committee be created for that purpose.

Mr. Smith said the NEDC Board began discussion of updating the strategic study about one year ago and it was clear at that time that there was no clear direction about what constituted a successful program. He said while NEDC could have updated the study internally, the NEDC Board felt a mutual third party should be hired to look at market conditions and what is taking place nationwide. He said the Steering Committee consists of 25 members of the community including the NEDC Board members who represent the City of Norman, OU, Moore-Norman Technology Center, and Chamber of Commerce. He said each of these entities was allowed to choose people they wanted to serve on the Steering Committee who were then appointed to the Steering Committee by the NEDC Board. He said it was important the study not be labeled as a NEDC plan, but as Norman's Community Economic Development Strategy and in order to make that happen it was important to obtain information from a cross section of citizens.

The first task of the Steering Committee was to select a contractor to manage the process and Market Street Services was selected. Mr. Smith said Market Street Services was founded in 1997 and supported communities through holistic community, economic, and workforce development. Market Street Services maintains a staff of professionals that excel in quantitative analysis, facilitation, and helping communities create actionable strategies for positive change. They are dedicated to community improvement that is about personal wealth creation for all citizens and building better communities. Market Street Services is one of the most respected firms that have assisted 165 communities in 35 different states throughout the United States (U.S.). He said the full report will be posted at [NormanEDPlan.com](http://NormanEDPlan.com).

Mr. Smith introduced Mr. Matt Tarleton, Principal for Market Street Services. Mr. Tarleton encouraged everyone to review the full report on [NormanEDPlan.com](http://NormanEDPlan.com) and highlighted the strategic study process, which consists of Phase One: Public and Stakeholder Input, Phase Two: Research and Analysis, and Phases Three and Four: Strategic Planning and Implementation Guidance. He said public and stakeholder engagement includes interviews, focus groups, online survey, and a project website. Research and analysis consists of a community assessment that evaluates the competitiveness of Norman as a place to work, live, and do business; incorporates stakeholder input and quantitative research; examines data in context to benchmarks against the competition; and identifies implications of findings.

Mr. Tarleton said communities that pursue this assessment have different stories and Norman's is structured in the context of six chapters that include changing preferences and regional growth patterns; emerging threats to workforce competitiveness; economic transition towards a more innovative economy; public education in developing and retaining talent in Norman; quality of life in a university town; and growth, development, and community vision.

Mr. Tarleton said Norman is growing at the same pace as most of the region and Cleveland County is growing at a rate faster than its peers within the region due to net migration based on information from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). He said main growth comes from people moving from Oklahoma City into Cleveland County's rural areas. He said Millennials have different preferences than Baby Boomers and Millennials prefer to live in urbanized areas that offer convenient public transit, walkability, and space between neighbors. He said many Millennials prefer to live in a place where they do not need to use a car often and that has a diverse mix of cultures and backgrounds. He said as Millennials age, they tend to stay in core cities and are fine with living in suburbs as long as an urban environment is provided, which basically leaves rural areas and smaller towns with little or no growth.

Item 3, continued:

Mr. Tarleton said, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are enough people nationwide from ages 25 to 34 to replace age groups of 45 to 64 who are approaching retirement in the next 20 years. He said communities can attract more people than they are losing and Norman is fortunate to have a relatively young workforce; however, that number is declining quickly which is a troubling trend that is having an impact on Norman's school system. He said retaining retiree's is not a bad thing, but leaves Norman with a non-income earning population growth and declining income earning growth. He said college educational attainment is declining and the percentage of people not obtaining a high school education is growing contrary to national trends. He said the ratio of employed residents to jobs is declining in Norman. He said private sector jobs are up 18% while public sector jobs are down 16.8%. He said private sector jobs include government; retail trade; accommodation and food service; health care and social assistance; manufacturing; arts, entertainment, and recreation; information; educational services; and management of companies (headquarters). While the top three sectors attract expenditures from surrounding communities, the other sectors generally do not attract new income or expenditures.

Mr. Tarleton said Norman has a strong base of entrepreneurs that can be leveraged to align with Norman's economic vision so Norman needs to try to transition from a more traditional university town to a more innovative economy that leverages its university in making that transition. The public school system is strong, but residents are concerned that education is an eroding strength and other communities in the region are improving their curriculum and facilities at a pace that is exceeding what is happening with Norman Public Schools. When asked what attaches a person to a place the expected responses were public schools, public safety, and jobs; however, social offerings, aesthetics, and openness were the surprising answers. He said people want to live in place that has things to do for their family and children, a place that is beautiful, and open to all backgrounds and cultures. He said Norman has very favorable survey results on quality of life issues such as volunteer opportunities; cultural and arts facilities; dining opportunities; personal and property safety; overall cost of living; diversity of housing availability; entertainment and appearance of community; and shopping opportunities. He said non-favorable quality of life survey issues include affordability of housing options; nightlife options for adults; quality of development, planning, and land use; availability of recreational paths and trails; quality and connectivity of sidewalks; quality and connectivity of public transportation; and ability to access shops, restaurants, and services without a car.

Mr. Tarleton said the business and development community believe they are burdened by higher costs in Norman for water and sewer connections as well as other utilities and a considerably more cumbersome permitting and review process than what is experienced in other parts of the region. They acknowledge Norman has taken steps to improve these processes; however, higher costs and perceptions of poor customer service are difficult issues to tackle.

Mr. Tarleton highlighted next steps and said Market Street Services will be working with the Steering Committee to develop the first draft of the Strategic Plan. Once there are finalized recommendations from the Steering Committee, the process will move towards defining rules and responsibilities that include what entity will review each piece, what it will cost, where the money will come from, and how progress will be measured. He said Market Street Services hopes to have the study completed by June.

Chairman Thompson thanked Mr. Tarleton and said EDAB is grateful to be part of this strategic planning process.

Items submitted for the record

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Economic Development Strategic Plan for Norman, Oklahoma," by Market Street Services

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**Item 4. Miscellaneous Discussion.**

Member Ringus noted that there were a number of takeaways from the Market Street presentation that underscored areas that EDAB could assist with. Chairman Thompson noted the original idea for the Committee was really centered around evaluation of specific economic development projects as they come forward, but big projects with requests for incentives haven't really materialized yet. Chairman Thompson agreed that the Market Street presentation highlighted a number of issues in Norman that negatively impact economic development, and there is a lot that EDAB could do to impact these issues. He conveyed that he wants to keep Market Street tightly connected to EDAB going forward.

Chairman Thompson said EDAB has been reviewing a multi-jurisdictional parking authority and as that process continues to move forward, EDAB is looking forward to updates from Staff.

Mr. Darry Stacy, Cleveland County Commissioner, said there are many County projects that will impact Norman's economic growth and will require coordination with the City. Mr. Stacy offered to provide EDAB with a presentation on the Cleveland County Master Plan at a future meeting.

Member Holmes said there are many projects in Norman that he feels EDAB should be discussing, e.g., UNPTIF, but these projects are never on EDAB's agenda and if EDAB is supposed to be an Advisory Board to City Council they should play a larger role on all economic projects. Chairman Thompson said City Council, by Rule of Three, requested information regarding construction of a Senior Citizen Center using University North Park Tax Increment District (UNPTIF) funds and EDAB should have the opportunity to have discussion on this issue and asked that it be placed on the next agenda. .

Mr. Jeff Bryant, City Attorney, said part of the difficulty is there is a Citizen's Oversight Committee for the UNPTIF whose role is to advise City Council, but felt input from multiple groups could be helpful.

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**Item 7. Adjourn.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 a.m.